

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed September 16, 2003 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-28 were pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 12, 19, 20, 27, and 28 have been amended, no claims have been canceled or newly added. Therefore, claims 1-28 are pending in the application and are submitted for reconsideration.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, are presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Rejections under § 102 and § 103

In the Office Action, claims 1-7, 10, 11, and 13-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,758,328 to Giovannoli (hereafter "Giovannoli"). Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Giovannoli in view of U.S. patent 5,961,593 to Gabber et al. (hereafter "Gabber"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, insofar as they may be applied to the pending claims, for at least the following reasons.

Each of the independent claims 1, 19, 27, and 28 recite a method (and corresponding system and software) for providing a user (i.e., a trading partner) of an electronic commerce electronic data interchange (EDI) system a convenient way of receiving the specific EDI products or services corresponding to the specific other trading partners that the user wishes to trade with using EDI. EC/EDI allows for exchange of EDI information (such as orders and invoices) between the trading partners as is well known to those skilled in the art and described in the specification at page 1, lines 8-18.

However, one of the problems of setting up conventional EDI exchanges with multiple other trading partners is that each of these trading partners may have a unique set of requirements (with corresponding sets of products and services) that are required to conduct EDI exchanges with these trading partners. Therefore, conducting EDI exchanges with multiple trading partners requires separately coordinating with each of these trading partners

to acquire the specific products and services to enable the EDI exchanges with the particular trading partners. See page 2, lines 1- 10 of the specification.

In order to address these and other problems in conventional EDI systems, the claimed invention provides for (1) obtaining information from a user to identify the trading partners, (2) retrieving requirements information particular to the identified trading partners, (3) determining the suitable EDI products and services based on the requirements information, and (4) obtaining registration information for registering the user for the determined suitable EDI products and services. Therefore, a user can conveniently determine the specific requirements of the various trading partners and register for the specific EDI products and services (corresponding to the requirements of the specific trading partners) at a single logical host server.

Neither these features nor its advantages is disclosed by the applied prior art. Specifically, Giovannoli relates to a computerized quotation system in which a buyers request for a quotation is sent out to one or more vendors who then respond the to the buyer. There is no centralized host server is Giovannoli that (1) stores the EDI related requirements of multiple trading partners, and (2) provides a list of EDI products or services of specific trading partners identified by a user, and (3) registers the user for the specific EDI products or services corresponding to the specific EDI related requirements of the specific trading partners. Therefore, these specific features recited in the pending independent claims are not disclosed or suggested by Giavannoli.

In fact, Giavannoli actually teaches away from the features recited in the claimed invention since Giavannoli teaches that “No central database of goods, prices, etc, is involved.” See col. 2, lines 41-42 of Giavannoli. That is, even if Giavannoli’s system for price quotation system were applied for the setting up of EDI exchanges (which is very different in nature from the price quotation system), the lack of central server hosting the EDI requirements of the multiple trading partners would defeat the purpose of the claimed invention. Therefore, Giavannoli does not teach either the features or the advantages of the claimed invention.

Furthermore, since the deficiencies of Giavannoli are not cured by any of the other applied references, the pending claims are believed to be patentable over the applied prior art.

Specifically, Gabber only relates to an anonymizer, that is, a system for anonymous browsing using a proxy system and does not relate to the provision of customized EDI products and services in any way.

Rejection under § 101

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants have amended the claim to be in statutory form and the applied rejection is believed to be overcome.

The dependent claims are also in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons, as discussed above, as the independent claims on which they ultimately depend. In addition, they recite additional patentable features when considered as a whole. For example, claims 2 and 20 recite that the server retrieves the requirements information from a database containing EDI requirements for a plurality of hub trading partners. This feature is also not disclosed or suggested by the applied prior art and provides an additional reason for the patentability of these claims.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants believe that the application is in condition for allowance and an indication of the same is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding the application, or if an examiner's amendment would facilitate the allowance of one or more of the claims, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicants hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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